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THE CHILDREN'S PAPER



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How We Spent Christmas.

I AM glad to say that Reggie and I can now skate. I don't mean that we can do outside edge, and figure eight, and things like that; but we can do plain, straightforward skating, and very jolly it is. But there has been so much snow that they can't clear the ice; so we have had a rest,



and our bruises are now quite better, thank you.

Yesterday was Christmas Day, and a rare fine time we had. In the morning we all went to church, and in the evening we had a party. Bertie Gladman, Harry Wilson, Rex Blake and his brother Jim, and a lot of girls came. We had early dinner, and, of course, a big plum-pudding, and after that a Christmas tree and a conjurer. I had

some fun with the conjurer, or rather he had some with me. After he had made a bird-cage fly away, and had got heaps of pennies to tumble out of the air into his hat, and things like that, he said, "Now, for the next trick I shall want a young gentleman to help me." Well, we all wanted to help him, but he picked me out. I don't know why, but he did. Perhaps it was because I looked so innocent.

Well, he asked me for my watch, and I gave it him. He pretended to slip the watch into a mortar; but I eyed him very closely, and saw that it wasn't my watch at all, for he put it on the table behind some tin canisters. Then he commenced to pound up the watch in the mortar, and the fellows began to laugh. He showed me the works and things all smashed up in the bottom of the mortar, and said, "I hope you don't mind." "Not a bit," I replied; "it isn't mine." "Hush!" he said very loud, and then he went round showing the fellows what a mess he had made of the watch. While he was doing so I picked up *my* watch off the table and popped it in my trouser pocket. I said to myself, "This trick isn't going to come off, and the conjurer will look awfully soft." But as it turned out, I was counting my chickens before they were hatched.

Well, the conjurer came back and hung about the table a bit, talking a lot of nonsense to make the kids laugh; then he poured the works and things of the smashed-up watch into a sort of funnel with a pistol fastened to it. He

put a cap on the pistol and fired it off!

"Now," he said, "feel in your trouser pocket, young gentleman, and you will find your watch there, safe and sound."

Of course it was there all right, for I'd put it there myself. Jolly clever of the conjurer I thought it. I had meant to spoil the trick, but he was too much for me. Of course I

just yet. Have you anything in your jacket pockets?"



didn't say anything about it, and the fellows never knew that he had "done" me.

"Just another trick before you go," he said. "You are such an excellent assistant that I don't want to lose you

I turned them inside out to show that they were empty, and then turned them outside in again. "Are you quite sure they are empty?" he asked, and of course I told him they were. "Allow me," he said, and then he put his hand in my pocket and pretended to be very much astonished.

"I hardly like to show you what this young gentleman carries about with him," he said. "It's very strange for a boy of his age." Then he brought out a baby's comforter and a rattle! My word, I was angry! The fellows roared, and the girls cackled, and I could have kicked that conjurer. I went as red as red, and I didn't get over it for the rest of the evening. I shall never help a conjurer again.

To-day we've tried tobogganing.

There's a fine hill just behind Hobson's orchard, and we've had a glorious time on it. Oh, I say, what a lot of spills we have had! but no "casualties"—as they used to say in the papers when the war was on. The worst of tobogganing is the dragging of the toboggan back to the top again. I wish it was downhill all the time; don't you?

Too Clever by Half.

A YOUNG Englishman, says the *Boston Globe*, was walking up and down the platform of a country railway junction, looking for a carriage with a vacant seat. He couldn't find it, and so, assuming an official air, he walked up to the last carriage and announced in stentorian tones,—

"All out here; this car isn't going."

There were exclamations of annoyance from the occupants of the car, but they all got out with their bags and made their way to cars ahead. The young man smiled as he took possession of a seat and filled another with his luggage.

"Ah," he murmured, "it's a grand thing to be born clever! Now I wish they'd start."

By-and-by the stationmaster put his head in the doorway. "Are you the young man who said this car wasn't going?"

"Yes," said the clever one, smiling.

"Well," said the stationmaster, "it isn't. The guard heard what you said, and he uncoupled it. He thought you were a director."

Stories of the Disciples of Jesus.

CHAPTER III.

CONVERSION OF SAUL.

SAUL hunted the poor Christians from their hiding-places. Wherever they fled he followed them. It seemed as if he could not rest; and when news was brought to him that many of the Christians had found a refuge in the city of Damascus, five days' journey from Jerusalem, he prepared at once for a fresh hunt. Taking a guard of soldiers with him, he set out with all haste, anxious to reach Damascus as soon as possible.

At last the city came in sight in all its fair beauty of white buildings, set in a garden of green trees and silver olive groves. But Saul was not thinking of its beauty.

It was midday, and most travellers rested then in some shade where they might escape the blinding heat of the sun; but Saul was in too great a hurry to rest, and he pressed forward with his band of soldiers.

The fierce heat beat down upon the white road, and dazzled their eyes; but it was not the sunlight which suddenly wrapped them round with such a blinding glare that the whole company fell with their faces to the ground, as if struck by lightning. The light was brighter than any sunlight, and from the midst of the light came a strange sound—a sound which to the soldiers seemed only a confused noise,

but which Saul knew to be the voice of God.

"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" said the voice.

From the blinded, helpless figure lying there upon the ground the words burst out, "Who art Thou, Lord?"

"I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom



thou persecutest," came the voice again.

Saul's proud, fierce spirit was broken. He was as humble as a little child as he listened to that voice. "What shall I do, Lord?" he asked.

There, in the midst of the light, stood Jesus Christ, the King whom he had believed to be an impostor. Now, seeing Him as St. Stephen had seen Him, he knew that it was the

Master, the Captain of his soul, who spoke to him.

There was a great work before him, said the voice; but first he must go on to the city and wait there until a messenger should come and tell him what he was to do.

The terrified, listening soldiers began to recover. The light had vanished, the noise had ceased, and they stood up upon their feet again. But Saul still lay there, trembling and bewildered, and when they went to raise him they found that he was blind, and could only hold out groping hands in the darkness. So they went on their way as best they could, and led Saul stumbling along the road, until they reached the city.

There for three black days he waited. But in the darkness he learned to pray, and on the third day God's messenger came, and brought light and comfort. The blindness was lifted not only from his eyes, but also from his heart, and he saw clearly that now he must obey the King and fight His battles.

At first the Christians would scarcely believe that the man they so feared was now their friend, and they still distrusted him; but as time went on they were forced to believe in the great change. Just as thoroughly as he had once led the persecution, he now worked with all his might to help them, eager to show his love for the Master, no matter how much pain and suffering fell to his share.

And before many weeks were past he began to suffer with his fellow-Christians. As he had persecuted

others, now he himself was the persecuted, and the Jews made up their minds that he must be seized and put to death. Soldiers were set to guard the city gates, and orders were given to arrest him if he tried to escape.

Now the city walls around Damascus were so solid and broad that many houses were built upon them, and their windows looked over the surrounding fields across the moat below. Some of Saul's friends lived in one of these wall houses, and they felt sure that if Saul was to escape the best plan would be to lower him from one of the windows, out of sight of the city guards. So they took a large basket, and fastened it with a rope, and when Saul had climbed into the basket, they lowered it slowly down against the wall, swaying to and fro until it touched the ground.

No one was in sight. It was easy now to cross the moat and make his way across the fields. Saul had for that time, at least, escaped his enemies.

Motto for December.

*To look up and not down,
To look forward and not back,
To look out and not in, and
To lend a hand.*

EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

Golden Text for the Month.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

ST. LUKE ii. 14.

Wolves.

DID you ever wonder why in so many of the old nursery tales there is mention of fierce wolves? Red Riding Hood met one. There was the wolf who "huffed and puffed and blew the house of the little kids in." There were other wolves, too; and it seems quite natural, somehow, in those tales, for the great, gaunt creatures to lurk in the forests and to hover around the woodcutters' cottages at night, though if such a thing happened nowadays in this country we'd be more than a bit surprised.

Well, there's a reason for the wolves in those old stories. In the long-ago times when the tales were first told, they were partly true at least; for there were wolves in this country then—yes, in pretty nearly every county of it—lots of them, hunting alone or hunting in packs, according to the season of the year, but always very fierce and hungry ones to meet. Their old bones can still be found quite often in caves and burrows and hillsides. They were hunted in England until the days of King Henry VII., while the last wolf in Scotland is said to have been killed by Sir Ewan Cameron in the year 1680. Until then the fierce beasts kept their dens in the forests by day and prowled out at nights. They were for all the world like huge, gaunt, hungry sheep dogs to look at, but their legs were longer, and their ears more pointed. Their bushy tails hung down between their hind legs; they could climb a little, which dogs cannot; and the pupils of their queerly

placed eyes had a power of contracting in the bright light of daytime. These wolves were the terror of the countryside. There were many children quite as frightened of them as ever Red Riding Hood could have been, and

being shortened according to the number of wolf tongues that they could produce by a given time. A tax, too, due to the king by the Welsh people was changed for a tribute of three hundred wolf skins, to be paid yearly



parents dreaded the prowling beasts just as much as did the girls and boys.

They have vanished now, and we have forgotten them, but it took years and years to get rid of the pest. The ancient Britons hunted them, and in the time of Edgar, the old Saxon king, the country was so overrun by wolves that criminals were released and allowed to hunt them, their sentences

by that little country. And so, by slow degrees, the wild beasts disappeared from our land.

But there are plenty of wolves still to be found in other countries; over the whole of the northern hemisphere they prowl, and over the mainland of many parts of our own continent. In Russia and Scandinavia they hunt and are hunted; in Greece and Italy

they live. Even France and Spain are still visited by the beasts, although much trouble has been taken to rid these countries of them; and without the barrier of water which our island country boasts, we ourselves might easily be revisited too by the scourge of long ago.

Nowadays, wherever the wolf may be found, its habits are pretty much the same as they always were. For a good part of the year it hunts alone or in pairs, resting in its den all day, and hunting by night if there be danger about, or hunting both day and night if the countryside be lonely enough. It attacks sheep, poultry, and farm animals if there are any human habitations near by. A dreadful curse the wolf may be to shepherds, for it has been known to leap over the high wall of a fold and to destroy a quarter of the flock before it could be chased away. But deer is a favourite food in the northern countries; and as there is often a large family of perhaps eight or nine cubs for each pair to nourish, plenty of food is wanted.

Wolves have very keen powers of scent; they are patient and clever, too, in following up any spoor. A wolf scout sets out, and presently he tracks down an unsuspecting deer. In answer to his howl half the pack comes cautiously nearer, and scents the prey too; then, reaching the spot, they rush forward and make a half-circle round the victim. He sees their grinning faces and lolling tongues, and waits with his antlers lowered for them to attack; but they are not going to attack yet—they have other plans

in formation. They wait a little, and sit there grinning, while the deer stands in suspense. "Shall I run?" he thinks. "No, better not. They are so close to me that they will be all upon me if I turn. I will face them, and if any one of them comes closer, I can toss him with my great horns."

That's what he does; that's what the wolves knew he would do, and so they have made their plans that way. For the leader has meanwhile sent off the other half of the pack to the rear. Then suddenly, while the first wolves are still sitting grinning, there comes a howl from behind. The victim turns with horror: he is quite encircled with wolves! He must make a spring for his life, or give in at once.

Probably he tries for a fighting chance; with his horns laid back, and his head held muzzle-high, he speeds along the snowy plains. The wolves are after him, though; the whole pack howling in hungry chase. At first the moose thinks that he will outstrip them, but soon the frosty crust over the snow cuts into his slender legs, and he cannot run so well. If luck be against him, the wolves will soon overtake him; if luck be with him, though, he may have the chance to reach a lightly frozen river, and breaking the ice so that the wolves cannot follow him, he may be able to stand at bay in the water until they tire of sitting on the bank yapping at him, and go off to find a meal elsewhere.

Wolves are courageous too. They will go where hunger leads them, and hunger is a stern master. They show no fear of man or beast, and attack

horned cattle or horses or armed men in times of great need. It is said that twenty-four soldiers, fully armed, were attacked by wolves on the retreat from Moscow, and that there was no escape for one of them.

Here is a story of a gallant deed done long ago. A Russian gentleman was travelling with his wife and little child ; they travelled in a sledge drawn by four horses, and on the box beside the driver was a servant, Eric, who had served the gentleman for many years.

Night came upon the travellers, and the landlord of an inn at which they stopped to change the horses begged them to stay there till the next day, for the road ran through a great forest, and the howling of a pack of wolves had recently been heard. The gentleman was in a hurry to get home, and would not stop. Fresh horses were soon harnessed, and the sledge went on. On through the great dark wood they went. The lady and the little child clung close together, while the father listened for the slightest sound. He loaded both his pistols, and his servant Eric did the same.

Presently the howling of a pack of wolves was heard behind. The coachman lashed his horses to a gallop, and the sledge flew swiftly over the hard ground. But the fierce, hungry wolves came faster still, and soon their glaring eyes were seen. Both Eric and his master fired, and a wolf was killed ; but still the pack came on.

"Jump down and cut a horse loose," now cried Eric to the coachman. In an instant this was done ; the poor horse dashed away into the forest,

but had not gone far before the wolves had seized and pulled him down. In a few moments they had eaten him, and then came on as furiously as ever.

A second horse was loosed, dashed off into the forest, was pursued and killed, and once again the wolves were close behind the sledge. A mile in front the lights of the next inn were clearly seen ; if once the travellers reached it they were safe. But the wolves were leaping at the sledge and horses ; hope seemed lost. Eric turned to his master.

"Give me your pistols, sir," he said, "and then drive on to safety ; I will keep the wolves at bay." And as he spoke, he sprang down from his seat.

His master hesitated, but it seemed the only way to save his wife and child. On dashed the sledge ; Eric was heard to fire once, twice, three times—then no more. The wolves thronged round, and pulled him to the ground. Eric had died that those he had served and loved so well might live.

Let me tell you another story of adventure with wolves. A tourist, who was thoroughly enjoying himself during a winter holiday in North Scandinavia, had a perfectly terrific adventure one night. He was an excellent skater, and on a beautiful moonlight evening he thought he would take a turn up the frozen river ; so off he started in excellent spirits with himself and all the world.

He had skated for about two miles when he came upon a little stream which flowed into the larger river. Being keen on exploring, he turned his way up its frozen course, for in the

moonlight the dark forest trees on its banks looked so grim and mysterious that he felt he must know more of them; his adventure-loving spirit was thoroughly awakened. "Hurrah!" he shouted to the silent sky.

Was it an echo? He laughed at the idea at first. It could *not* be an echo, for the sound that he had heard came again. There was no human habitation within miles, so what could the strange weird sound mean which somehow seemed to grow louder and louder each time it was repeated?

Wolves! The thought suddenly struck him, for it was a tremendous yell at last, just as the sound of breaking bushes, crashing of undergrowth, and trampling of branches sounded near. For one instant the skater felt petrified. What could he do? He would be torn limb from limb within a minute or so. Then his British pluck returned.

He was unarmed. If they caught him, that would be the end; but they should *not* if he could help it. Although the wolves were only a hundred yards away, although they could be seen lurking dimly by the side of the forest trees, although in an instant they would spring, yet off, off flew the skater, like an arrow from a bow, with his pursuers at his heels!

Down the stream, while the wolves followed on the bank. "Woo-oo!" they howled on a huge ledge above his head as he passed along. He lowered his head and flew on as they sprang at him. Perhaps they hadn't judged that a human being could skate so fast, for they jumped short by a yard or two.

The skater was still safe—if *safe* it could be called when he was two miles from home with a pack of howling wolves behind!

What if his skates failed him! What if he should trip! What if—! But there was no time for such thoughts; his whole determination must be set in winning through, and grimly he skated on. While the pattering of the feet came behind, their howls grew louder still, their snuffing was close, their hot breath came up to meet his own!

And then suddenly an idea came! It was a very desperate plan, but the only chance—and it acted! Why not dodge them? Why not turn suddenly and let them race past; then turn again, and gain a small distance each time? It needed nerve to try such a desperate experiment at such an awful moment, but it *was* tried. It succeeded too, for at each dodging the wolves raced past their victim in the mad rush, and before they could turn again on his tracks he had gained a hundred yards or so. The wolves were thrown behind, but were they down-hearted? No—on they came.

Ah! but home was drawing nearer every minute, and with home the sounds of civilization. Suddenly the loud baying of the furious house dogs was heard, the clanging of their chains as they strained to try to help with the danger that they could scent. The lights of the house came in sight, the sounds of voices. Just as suddenly as they had come, the wolves went—turned tail, and made their way back into the darkness—into the wilds of the gloomy, mysterious forest. They were *gone*!

The Tongue-cut Sparrow.

A JAPANESE FAIRY TALE.

LONG, long ago, in a beautiful part of western Japan, there dwelt an old man and his wife.

They were both hard-working people, but the old woman had one great fault. She was a regular cross-patch, and did nothing else besides her daily toil but grumble from morn till night.

Now these old people had no little children of their own, and so the poor old man, who grew tired of hearing his wife scold so much, kept a little brown sparrow which he loved very much. When evening came, and he returned home from working in the rice fields, he would take his little pet from its wooden cage, and let it fly about the room. Sometimes he would whistle and talk to it, and let it feed out of his hand. The old man loved his little brown friend.

One day, when the husband was out in the rice fields as usual, his wife, who intended to wash some clothes, went to get her bowl of rice starch which she had got ready the night before, when, to her astonishment, the bowl was empty. The old woman at once blamed the cat, and was going to cut a long, thick stick to beat it for its theft, when the little truthful bird flew down to her and said, "Do not beat the poor cat, for it was I who took the starch. I did not intend to steal it, as I thought it was food put out for me to eat. I am very sorry indeed!"

"Bah!" growled the old woman. "It was you, was it? You greedy, good-for-nothing, little brown wretch!"

Now the old woman had never loved

the sparrow, and she was glad to have some cause of complaint against the little helpless thing. "I'll pay you out for taking my starch," she cried. "It was that tongue of yours, I suppose, that licked it up, so I will cut it off."

Saying this, she quickly seized the poor trembling little bird, and with her long sharp scissors cut off its little tongue.

"There now," she said, "how do you like that? It serves you right; you greedy thing!"—and taking it to the window, she drove the tiny tongue-cut sparrow away.

That evening when the tired old man came home from his hard daily toil, he looked in every room for his little pet, and was very much troubled at not finding her.

"Where is my little Suzume san (Miss Sparrow)?" he asked his wife.

The evil old woman at first would not tell him, but at last she told her husband how the sparrow had eaten the rice starch, and how in her great anger she had taken her sharp scissors and cut out its tongue, and finally driven it away.

"Oh! my poor little pet! My poor little sparrow! My poor helpless little thing!" were the only words the kind old man could utter. "Never again will she be able to sing to me. Never again shall I hear her sweet voice. Oh! how cruel and unkind it was to hurt my little pet like that," and the old man wept bitterly.

Late that night, when his wife was fast asleep, the old man decided to go and seek for his little tongue-cut friend; so, rising early next morning, he set out

through the woods in search of the sparrow.

When midday came, the old man stopped to rest under a shady clump of pine trees, and as he was resting, to his great joy he saw his own darling sparrow suddenly fly down from a tall pine tree in front of him. Oh how glad he was! He caressed his little friend again and again, and at last asked about its "honourable" tongue. The old man told the little sparrow how very sorry he was to learn of his wife's cruelty, and hoped that the sparrow would soon forgive his wife.

"See here!" said the sparrow after a short time, "I have another tongue." On hearing his little tongue-cut friend speak, the old man's joy knew no bounds. Old as he was, he jumped and danced with joy until the sparrow had to laugh heartily. He forgot all his troubles, and said that the bird must be indeed a fairy, to have grown another tongue in so short a time. "Now," said the sparrow, speaking more sweetly than ever, "let me take you to my house in that grove of pine trees yonder." "Thank you," replied the man, "I should like very much to go," and away they both went. On reaching the grove the old man was amazed to see the outside of a small neatly built house, and upon entering inside his heart was filled with ecstasy. On the floor, which was built of satin-wood, were cream-coloured *tatami* (mats); and the *zabuton*, or the small cushions for sitting upon, as Japanese houses have no chairs, were of rich plum-coloured silk. Beautiful *kake-monos* hung from the walls, and vases

and ornaments adorned many a cosy nook and corner. The sparrow, after leading the kind old man to the place of honour, the *tokonoma*, and thanking him for the many kindnesses which he had given her, introduced all her family. There were the young and graceful Misses Sparrow, and the two young and clever Masters Sparrow. After a happy talk all together, the Misses Sparrow played the *samisen* and sang, while the two clever Masters Sparrow told stories of famous warriors of long ago. When dinner was over, they went outside on the veranda and drank their little cups of green tea. Now as darkness was fast setting in, and the old man had a long way to go before reaching his home, he rose to depart, after thanking his kind hostess and her daughters and sons for the very happy welcome they had given him. They were very sorry to lose the kind old man, and asked him to stay a few days longer with them; but he excused himself by saying he would come again to see them. Still they insisted on his staying, but he said he must return to his old wife, who would be wondering where he had got to; and also there was much to be done in the fields, so he would ask them again to excuse him.

"Very well, my dear friend," said the mother sparrow, "we shall not keep you; only come again as often as you can." Ringing a bell, she told the servant to bring in the two boxes standing outside. One was large, and one was small. The mother sparrow placed them both before the old man, and told him to choose one as a present from herself and family.



The old man chose the smaller box, saying, "I thank you very much, but I shall gladly take the smaller one, as it will be easier for me to carry. I give you a thousand thanks for your kindness. *Sayonara! Sayonara!*"

After they had all said "*Sayonara*," the old man shouldered his box and trudged joyfully homeward.

When he reached his home, he found his wife angrier than ever. She began to scold him dreadfully by saying, "You lazy old thing, wherever have you been? How is it you are so late? Here I have been waiting for you for ever so long! A kind husband you are, to be sure!"

The old man took all her angry remarks without saying a word; but at

last he said, "Wife, look here! I have something in this box. Let me tell you where it came from." So he told his cross old wife how he had met the little sparrow, and how he had been entertained at her house. The old woman was greatly surprised; but when she and her husband came to open the box, she was more greatly surprised. To their great joy they found the box full of gold and silver coins, and as they emptied them out upon the mats, they found many precious stones glittering at the bottom of the box. There lay the great shining heap upon the floor, and both the old man and his wife feasted their eyes upon it.

"You kind little bird," the old man said many times, "how good you are;

now I shall not have to work so hard." But as the eyes of the greedy old woman fell upon the heap of precious things, she began to reproach and scold the old man for not having brought the larger box. "You old stupid!" she sneered, "why didn't you bring the larger box? We might have had twice as much money as this. What a great stupid you are, to be sure!" and she went to bed angrier than ever.

The poor old man now wished he had said nothing about the larger box; but, alas! it was too late.

The following day was very sunshiny, so the old woman, who had made up her mind to go and get the larger box, asked her husband to tell her the way to the sparrow's house.

"My dear," said the old man, "let us be contented. This is plenty for us to live on until we die. Pray do not go, but let us be content."

"Contented!" shrieked his wife; 'indeed, if you are, I am not, and so I am going.' The greed of the cross old woman even made her forget her cruel deed in cutting off the little sparrow's tongue. While the old woman was on the way, she thought of nothing else but the big box and the stacks of money which it contained. At last she arrived at the sparrow's house. "Is this the tongue-cut sparrow's house?" she snappishly asked one of the daughters who came to the door.

"I do not understand you," replied the daughter: "I shall call my mother." So she called the little mother sparrow whose tongue had been cut, who came out to greet the old woman.

The "tongue-cut" sparrow was very

polite to the old woman; but the latter cut the sparrow's politeness short by saying, "You need not trouble to give me any tea or cakes, for I'm not coming into your house; all I came for is to get that larger box which my foolish husband left behind. Had I been offered two boxes, I should have taken both. Please give me the larger box at once."

"Very well," replied the little mother sparrow, "just wait a moment;" so she told the servants to bring out the large box.

The greedy, cruel old woman, as soon as she saw the big box, seized it, and, without even pausing to thank the Sparrow family for it, marched rapidly away. The box was exceedingly heavy, and, as the old woman needed rest, she had often to sit down upon the roadside and wait a little.

"How lovely this box full of money will be," said the selfish old woman to herself. "I shall have it all for myself. My husband shall not get a sen of it. But I am longing to open it, and I think I'll just put it down under those pine trees yonder and open it. Yes! I will do that."

So the greedy old woman carried the box to the clump of trees and opened it. Oh, what did she see? Money? No. Precious stones? No. Beautiful clothes? No. What she saw nearly frightened her to death; for, as soon as she lifted the lid, a number of awfully ugly and horrible-looking demons jumped out of the box with eyes of fire and fingers with long claws. Snakes coiled and hissed about her, and black lizards poked their long blue

tongues at her. The demons yelled and jumped around her, and made dreadful faces.

The old woman fell senseless to the ground, and after a time, when she gained consciousness, ran home as fast as her trembling legs could carry her. Arriving at her house, she fell in a faint on the floor, and lay there for many hours. At last, when she opened her eyes, she found her kind old husband sitting beside her and fanning her.

She told the old man all that had happened to her; and how she had been punished for her greediness. "Yes!" replied the old man, "you have brought all this on yourself through your cruel and selfish ways. I do sincerely trust you will turn over a new leaf and repent of all your folly."

"Yes," said the old woman, "I see I have been a cross-patch, a cruel and selfish woman, and I will henceforth try and live a better life."

From that day forward the old man and his wife lived very peaceably together. They had plenty to live on from the treasures which the mother sparrow had given them. Their days were long and happy, and when the winter evenings came, the contented old couple would sit round the *hibachi* (fire-box) and talk about the days gone by, and their little brown friend, the tongue-cut sparrow.

A Conundrum.

WHAT is the difference between a cow and a rickety chair?

Answer: One gives milk and the other gives way (whey).

How English and American Differ.

"I SPEAK four languages," proudly boasted the door man of a hotel in Rome to an American guest. "Yes, four—Italian, French, English, and American."

"But English and American are the same," protested the guest.

"Not at all," replied the man. "If an Englishman should come up now, I should talk like this: 'Oh, I say, what extraordinarily shocking weather we're having! I dare say there'll be a bit of it ahead.' But when you came up I was just getting ready to say: 'For the love o' Mike! Some day, ain't it? Guess this is the second flood, all right.'"

Hearing not Believing.

THE new commander-in-chief of India, Lord Rawlinson, tells an amusing story of an experiment he once made to test the accuracy of oral messages.

"Two hundred men," he says, "I strung out at intervals of two paces. Then I gave a message to my adjutant, telling him to give it orally to the man at the head to be repeated from man to man down the line until it came to me at the other end of it. This was the message: 'We are going to advance. Can you send us reinforcements?' When it came back to me some minutes later it had turned to this: 'We are going to a dance. Can you send us three-and-fourpence?'"

THE SERIAL STORY.

Two on an Island.

BY ETHEL TALBOT.

CHAPTER XII.

BUT Marjorie had flown already. Suppose, oh, suppose they were to be left again after all on the island! She raced to the top of the nearest ridge, calling as she went. "Coo-ee!" she shouted at the top of her voice; "we're here!"

After that, everything happened together in an excited muddle that was very difficult to remember exactly. But one thing stood out very clearly in her mind—the memory of a tall man who came hurriedly over the boulders, lifted her up, and kissed her. "You're Marjorie," he said; "and—you're safe!" His voice sounded quite shaky and queer, the child noticed. "And where's my boy?—where's Jim?"

"He's here!" said Marjorie. She forgot for a moment that she was being brave, and clung to the stranger's strong arms and held him tight. "Oh, I'm so glad you've come," she said; "I know you're Jim's Dad, but you'll take me too, won't you?"

The stranger had kept Marjorie in his arms, and had strode forward, and they were at Jim's side now.

"Hulloa, Dad!" said the boy, looking up. "I'm most awfully sorry about it all. It was all my fault, and I've got Marjorie into no end of a pickle, but— And now my ankle——"

"It wasn't—" Marjorie was beginning, but the stranger interrupted.

"You're a pair of young savages; but we'd better look after the foot first," he said in a very gruff voice, "and then we'll get you off here as soon as we can. You'll both be glad to sleep in proper beds to-night, I should imagine. And how—" He stared round. "The beacon was yours, I guessed, after I'd seen the camp fire you'd made. I thought you'd guess if I lighted up; and so——"

"And there's the treasure, Dad," said Jim eagerly. He poured out the story of the smugglers while his father bandaged up his foot. "We can't let it go, of course; it's worth ever so much. So we——"

His father listened. "It's a queer experience," he said at last, "and it seems to me that you've done all that can be done, till to-morrow. We'll get back to Crioch and lay the matter before your uncle; and, my dear," he turned to the little girl, "your mother."

"Mother!" exclaimed Marjorie; "is she here?"

"She's at Crioch, and feeling very anxious. You two, you know, by disappearing like that, gave a great fright to a great many people. We came up as soon as we could, and——"

"Dad, when did you get to Crioch?" broke in Jim.

"Only to-day. We were——" His father paused. "We found Marjorie's governess, and your uncle Jim, in great despair."

"And they never guessed?" said the boy. "I'm most awfully——"

"No, you see the boat was washed up the day after you disappeared; it was washed on to Criocho beach, and Marjorie's hair-ribbon was found in it, and they thought you were drowned. But I—somehow when I arrived and heard the story, having a better knowledge of you, old chap" (his father smiled affectionately at Jim), "and remembering your love of adventure—thought that there might be another explanation. I spoke to the 'boots,' and he remembered that you had been asking for particulars of a certain ghost, and—here I am."

Jim's ankle was bandaged now, and he was able to limp along with the help of his father's strong arm.

"We'll get down to the shore," said the latter. "I've a boatman waiting, who'll take us off, and——"

"And the treasure, Dad?" said Jim again.

"We'll leave it, old chap, for the night," said his father; "for it will be safe enough till to-morrow under the sand where you buried it. I begin to see, I think, the explanation of the mystery of this so-called ghost. There's a very strong current off this shore to the side where the treasure is found—the boatman told me of the current when he rowed me over—and it's more than likely that some of the seamen in the villages near the island have discovered that treasure is cast up here. Probably these smugglers of yours have started the ghost story for their own interest, to keep the island to themselves. Your uncle has talked the matter over with me before; it has been thought

for years that the treasure was being cast up somewhere in this way, but *where*, they did not know. Now, perhaps, you've laid the ghost by your adventure, for we'll see that the rest of the job gets tackled just as soon as we get back. You'll get some credit for your find, no doubt."

"Marjorie's due as much as me, if not more," remarked Jim; "she's been a little brick, and——"

"So I've heard before," said Jim's father.

"But——" Marjorie stared. "Did my governess tell you so, because——"

"No, my dear, but your mother did. I happen to know your mother very well indeed. She——" He helped Jim over a stiff piece of ground. "Jim, do you remember Mrs. Maitland who patched you up last year, and was good to you when you fell from a tree and had an accident?"

"Rather," said Jim, with enthusiasm.

"Mrs. Maitland," said Marjorie; "why, that's *mother*!" She stared, and a light broke over her face. "Are you the——!"

"Yes." Jim's father smiled. "You've guessed, Marjorie, for you knew partly before. Your mother is going to be Jim's mother, too. In fact, old chap, the business that prevented our holiday was very important business for both you and me, and will lead, I know, to a great deal of happiness. We were married in London, and came straight up afterwards on hearing the news of your disappearance; and now I'm going to take you both back to her."

"Jim," said Marjorie, "I told you I had a secret; but I never guessed it all." She smiled up at the stranger. "Oh, if only you'd told me that the lady 'who patched you up' had the same name as mine, then I'd have guessed, and we might have known all the time. But——"

"Steady on, mate," said Jim, but he was smiling with evident delight at the arrangement. "How could I know that your name was Maitland? Comes of being on a desert island, you know," he added with a grin.

"And," Marjorie's hand crept shyly into that of Jim's father, "if mother's to be Jim's mother, then——"

"I'll be your Dad as well as Jim's, to the best of my ability," said the new friend.—"What do you say to that, old chap?"

"I say," said Jim, looking up with a grin, "that it's the jolliest thing that could have happened all round."

THE END.

In the Crevasse.

DR. COPE, who is one of England's most experienced Antarctic explorers, was leading three men over a dangerous glacier, when he failed to notice a narrow crevasse that was bridged with snow. Suddenly he felt the snow give way, and fell headlong through space. But twenty feet below the edge the sledge harness, which he had fastened round his chest and shoulders, caught and held him suspended. Fortunately his companions saw him fall, and immediately made the sledge ropes fast.

Cope looked round him. The crevasse widened downward until its sides disappeared from view, and below that—darkness and illimitable depths!

"Are you all right?" came a voice.

"Yes, but I can't get up; I'm hung here."

"Hang on then!" shouted the man above. "We'll make a rope ladder." With that he disappeared.

It grew colder and colder in the icy crevasse. Cope's mitts fell off, and he watched them drop, striking the ice, until they disappeared. His hands were soon numb, and his body half frozen. Now and then the roar of ice falling down some far distant crevasse broke the silence.

At last the ladder was finished, and the men lowered it. Since Cope's sense of touch was completely gone by that time, he had to watch his hands to see that they clutched the rope as he climbed. Swinging backward and forward over the pit, he gradually made his way toward the top. But just before he reached it his harness came off. If he slipped, nothing would save him from being dashed to pieces. He was so numb and exhausted that he could not stretch his legs far enough to reach from one rung to the next.

He called up faintly to the men, and they lowered the harness until he was able to push his legs through it. Half sitting in it and feebly grasping the rope ladder, he was hauled the few remaining feet to the surface. He had been hanging over that apparently bottomless pit for three and a half hours.

Rules for Competitors.

COMPETITORS *must* attend to the following rules :—

1. Subject to the age limits, you may enter for any or all of the competitions, but you must attach to your answers one Competition Form cut from the current number of the paper. The Competition Form will be found on page 240. No answers will be considered unless accompanied by this Competition Form. It must be filled up as directed.

2. A Competition Form *must be attached to one* of the papers sent in by each competitor. Other competitions entered must have the name, address, and age of the sender written distinctly upon them.

3. Care should be taken with *writing* and *neatness*, as these will be taken into consideration in judging all competitions.

4. Address your answers to "Aunt Mary," *Children's Paper*, c/o Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., Parkside Works, Edinburgh.

5. No answers received later than **December 15** will be considered.

[We rely upon you to send in your own unaided work.]

Competitions for December.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Competitors must put their full postal address on each competition, and must put a sufficient amount of stamps on their packets before posting; but are requested *not to enclose* stamps for replies, as these can in no case be sent.

In each Competition the Editor offers two prizes.

For all Ages up to Sixteen.

ORIGINAL POEM COMPETITION.

Write an original poem, making your subject deal with Christmas.

ARITHMETICAL COMPETITION.

At a recent meeting of suffragists a serious difference of opinion arose. This led to a split, and a certain number left the meeting. "I had half a mind to go myself," said the chairwoman, "and if I had done so, two-thirds of us would have retired." "True," said another member, "but if I had persuaded my friends Mrs. Wild and Christine Armstrong to remain, we should only have lost half our number." Can you tell how many were present at the meeting at the start?

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (A).

Make a drawing (a little larger) of the picture on page 1 of cover, and colour it either with water colours or chalks.

SCRIPTURE KNOWLEDGE COMPETITION (A).

Tell in your own words the story of the first Christmas morning.

For Children under Twelve only.

COMPOSITION COMPETITION.

Write a short essay telling how you would like to spend your Christmas holidays.

WORD SQUARE.

1. A boy's name.
2. A river in the United States.
3. To make a noise like a serpent.
4. An organ of the body.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (B).

Make a drawing of a decorated Christmas-tree, and colour it either with water colours or chalks.

SCRIPTURE KNOWLEDGE COMPETITION (B).

Tell the story of King Ahab and Naboth's vineyard.

For Children under Ten only.

Write Aunt Mary a letter telling her about the kind of party you most enjoy.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (C).

Make a drawing of a Santa Claus stocking, and colour it either with water colours or chalks.

MOTTO COMPETITION.

The Editor invites all to enter this competition. A book prize will be given for the motto which is published in the paper. Each motto should have the name of the author from whom the quotation is taken.

Prize List for October.

ESSAY COMPETITION.

1. Leslie Wise, Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake School, Leicester.
2. Ethel Pope, Kemberton School, Shifnal, Salop.

Honourable Mention.—Marjorie Butler, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge; John Clive Dunn, Kemberton School, Shifnal, Salop; Freda M. Combe, Hollist, Midhurst, Sussex.

JUMBLED PROVERBS.

1. Ivy Furlong, Brynamlwg, The Avenue, Carmarthen.
2. Norman D. Brown, Brongreye, Cyprus Avenue, Bloomfield, Belfast.

Honourable Mention.—Ada F. Crossan, Amara, St. John's Terrace, Corstorphine; John Liddell, 4 Thomas Street, Greenock; Mollie Bateson, 78 Bullingdon Road, Oxford; Fred Craig, Ingleby,



Whiteabbey, Belfast; Margaret Nisbet, c/o Mrs. Fraser, 22 Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (A).

1. Ruth Billington, Mount School, Kersal, Manchester. 2. Ivy May Stubbs, Minshull Vernon C. of E. School, near Crewe.

Honourable Mention.—Joseph Clay, Kemberton School, Shifnal, Salop; Doris Thompson, St. Dominic's School, High Street, Harpenden, Herts; John Gibson, 5 Union Street, Kilmar-nock; Lucy Armstrong, Minshull Vernon C. of E. School, near Crewe.

SCRIPTURE KNOWLEDGE COMPETITION (A).

1. Constance Hadgkiss, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge. 2. Frances Harris, Church Lane, Dunton, near Brentwood, Essex.

Honourable Mention.—Louis Yates and Dorothy Matthews, Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake School, near Leicester; Jack Pooler, Kemberton School, Shifnal, Salop.

COMPOSITION COMPETITION.

1. Doreen I. Buss, Budgenor Cottage, Easebourne, Midhurst. 2. Bernard Gibbs, New Road, Rubery, Birmingham.

Honourable Mention.—Dorothy Durrant, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge; Mary Rawson, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden, Herts; Sissie Baccas, Mount School, Kersal, Manchester.

DROPPED LETTER PUZZLE.

1. Mary Gumbleton, Huntcliffe, Bexley, Kent. 2. May Cree, Poleglass, Dunmurry, Co. Kent.

Honourable Mention.—Josie Payne, 27 Ashville Avenue, Cardigan Road, Leeds; Amy Giles, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (B).

1. Roy Brayne, Kemberton School, Shifnal, Salop. 2. Fred Driver, 134 Cock Hill Lane, Rubery, Birmingham.

Honourable Mention.—Bernard Gibbs, New Road, Rubery, Birmingham; Freda Ironmonger, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge.

SCRIPTURE KNOWLEDGE COMPETITION (B).

1. Henrietta McNeillage, 15 Bouverie Street, Yoker. 2. Olive Brown, Doesgate Farm, Bulphan, Romford, Essex.

Honourable Mention.—L. J. Bennett, Tillington, Petworth, Sussex; Annie Cranston, 18 Norham Street, Crossmyloof, Glasgow; Edith Johnson, St. Dominic's School, Harpenden, Herts.

LETTER COMPETITION.

1. Jim Bennett, Tillington, Petworth, Sussex. 2. Madge Skinner, Stoneybridge School, Belbroughton, near Stourbridge.

Honourable Mention.—Joseph Taylor, Kemberton School, Shifnal, Salop; Patsy Hornbrook, Mount School, Kersal, Manchester; Ronald Barker, 48 North Street, Halstead, Essex.

DRAWING AND COLOURING COMPETITION (C).

1. Eric Matthews, Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake School, Leicester. 2. Bernard Danby, 6 High-bury Terrace, Halstead.

Honourable Mention.—Cathie Cook, 55 Ashley Terrace, Edinburgh; Zoe Stericker, Mayles, Cobham, Surrey.

Yet the Man Moved Up.

"WILL the gentlemen please move forward a little?" called out the polite conductor of the trolley car as a dozen more passengers tried to scramble in.

"I won't!" growled one hard-faced man who clung to a strap near the door.

"Oh, I didn't ask you," said the conductor.

Shoddy Sheep.

"I BELIEVE I'll go over and examine those sheep of Giles a little more carefully," said Farmer T. to his wife. "He's offered three of them for that yellow heifer; but knowing him as I do, I'm going to be sure before he gets her that their fleece isn't half cotton instead of all wool."

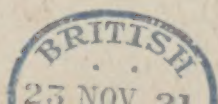
CHILDREN'S PAPER COMPETITION FORM. December.

Name.....

Age last Birthday.....

Address.....

Cut this out and attach it to any papers you may send in for Competition.



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